

Dore Schwinden
Director

Andy Poole
Deputy Director

**Montana Department
of Commerce**
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Montana Department of Commerce Business Resources Division Newsletter

FALL 2012

The Montana Department of Commerce has created this quarterly newsletter to update you on the status of our business resources financing programs and other program news. Contact information for each program is provided. Feel free to contact any Business Resources staff when you have questions about our programs, or to discuss potential applications.

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program Awards

Nancy Faroni and Marissa Kozel

The Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC) has made many awards this quarter from the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund (BSTF) Program. BSTF planning funds are awarded to local Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDC), tribal governments and local economic development agencies not located in a CRDC region, to assist in planning efforts to promote long-term, stable economic growth in both the region and Montana.

"Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Grants are proven business expansion tools," said Dore Schwinden, Director of the Montana Department of Commerce. "They help grow businesses and create jobs in communities across the state."

The planning awards include the following:

Bitterroot Economic Development District (BREDD), located in Missoula, received \$17,094 of BSTF funds to complete a feasibility study for Pimlico Studios, Inc.

Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC), located in Wolf Point, received \$21,000 of BSTF funds to assist Sand Creek Winds, LLC with the completion of a feasibility study.

Great Northern Development Corporation (GNDC), received \$100,000 of BSTF funds to assist coalition efforts in Eastern Montana with an impact study to encompass a 16-county area that has been impacted by the recent oil and gas development in Montana.

Prospera Business Network, located in Bozeman, received \$15,750 of BSTF funds to assist the City of Livingston with a branding campaign.

Prospera Business Network received \$57,750 of BSTF funds for the completion of a preliminary engineering report for the community of Gardiner.

Headwaters Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Area, Inc., which is located in Butte, received \$8,000 of BSTF funds to assist Montana Biochar with the completion of a feasibility study.

(Continued next page)

Montana Business Assistance Connections, which is located in Helena, received \$44,677 of BSTF funds to assist International Biomass Group (IBMG) with the completion of an electrical preliminary engineering report.

Chippewa Cree Tribe received \$26,250 of BSTF funds for the completion of a preliminary engineering report for the Middle Dry Fork area.

Fort Belknap Indian Community Council received \$25,000 of BSTF funds for the completion of a comprehensive appraisal of the paleontological and archeological resources on the Milk River Ranch, which is located 25 miles north of Gildford in Hill County.

Kootenai River Development Council, Inc., located in Libby, received \$17,800 of BSTF funds to complete a concept and schematic design for the installation of a small band saw mill capable of processing large diameter timber.

Snowy Mountain Development Corporation, located in Lewistown, received \$26,250 of BSTF funds to assist Central Montana Rail (CMR) with a Preliminary Engineering Report to assess the flood damaged railroad track.

Project awards include:

ZaneRay Group (Whitefish) received a \$67,350 BSTF award for equipment purchases and lease rate reduction which will enable business expansion, culminating in at least 10 net new BSTF eligible jobs.

SmartLam, LLC (Columbia Falls) received a \$217,500 BSTF award for equipment purchases which will enable business expansion, culminating in at least 29 net new BSTF eligible jobs.

Nomad Global Communication Solutions (GCS) [Kalispell] received a \$652,500 BSTF award for equipment purchases and for employee training certifications which will enable business expansion, culminating in at least 87 net new BSTF eligible jobs.

BSTF is a state-funded program. The goal of the program is to promote good-paying jobs and to promote long-term, stable economic growth in Montana. Besides planning projects, the BSTF program can provide assistance to basic sector Montana businesses, who are hiring net new positions within their company. For additional information about BSTF, visit www.bstf.mt.gov.

Coming Soon

The Business Resources Division will have a new website soon that will allow you to download project summary reports for economic development finance programs. This website will enable you to search for specific projects, review program funding awards, and find other pertinent information about program awards!

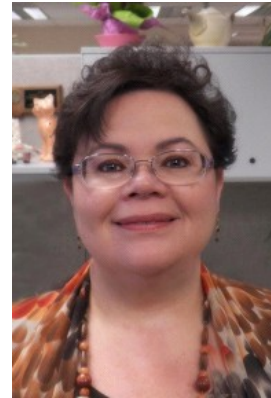
Technical Assistance

Montana Technology Innovation Partnership

Montana Technology Innovation Partnership

Phone: 406-841-2749

Email: cbell@mt.gov



Christine Bell
Program Manager

MTIP is excited to announce the winning of \$80,000 of FAST funding for special technology-based economic development (TBED) projects. The FAST Partnership Program is a federal competitive grants program designed to strengthen the technological competitiveness of small businesses, awarded to state and local economic development agencies, Small Business Development Centers, and colleges and universities. This funding allows MTIP to deliver more advanced services through its network of TBED consultants. MTIP staff and consultants assist science based Montana companies with acquiring research funding and intellectual property concerns.

With the help of two previous FAST funding awards, MTIP has been able to travel the state educating clients and service providers about opportunities and information available to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) companies, reaching out to those in need of technical assistance in areas of SBIR/STTR proposal development, technology commercialization, patents, trademarks, trade secrets and copyrights. Most recently, MTIP attended the Compete Smart Conference in Missoula, hosted by the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, meeting several new clients and providing one-on-one technical assistance on the spot.

If you are working with science/technology companies within your DOC program, you can refer them to MTIP for free services. See www.mtip.mt.gov, or talk with Christie Bell (2749) or Teresa Cooper (2750) for more information.

Business Finance Programs Certified Partners

Congratulations to the 31 graduates of the 2012 Business Resources Division Finance Program Certified Partner Elearning webinars! To see the list of the graduates, check this website:

<http://businessresources.mt.gov/content/docs/20122013CommerceCertifiedPartners>

These highly trained economic development professionals have received in-depth training on finance program applications and project management.

Technical Assistance

Montana Small Business Development Center

Montana Small Business Development Center

Phone: 406-841-2746

Email: adesch@mt.gov

Website: <http://sbdc.mt.gov>



Ann Desch
SBDC State Director

2013 Invest in Success Conference



INVEST IN *Success*

SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

The Montana Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network will be hosting their fourth annual Invest in Success small business conference on April 24th and 25th, 2013 at Montana Tech in Butte, Montana. The Montana SBDC Invest in Success Conference offers small businesses and potential entrepreneurs the opportunity to obtain knowledge to enhance their financial, managerial and technical skills as well as connect with resource partners and network with others in the small business community. The conference will feature many speakers specializing in all aspects of business.

Speakers include several SBDC Directors (Chris Parson, Rebecca Engum, Dan Anderson, Lorene Hintz and Rebecca Hedegaard), Colleen Rudio of Rudio Performance Management, Todd Daniels with the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, Christine Bell, Program Manager of Montana Technology Innovation Partnership, Murray Steinman of Flying Horse Communications and Tom Egelhoff of Small Town Business Marketing. There will also be a Montana Entrepreneur Panel featuring Sarah Calhoun of Red Ants Pants, Matt Kress of General Electric, Dave Robbins of SeaCast Investment Castings, and John and Courtney McKee of Headframes Spirits.



The Montana SBDC Network is excited to have Michael Shuman, an economic, attorney, author, entrepreneur *and* one of the world's leading experts on community economics, as the keynote speaker for the conference. Michael is a co-founder for the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE), a TEDx speaker, and the current Director of Marketing and Research for Cutting Edge Capital. (Photo: Michael Shuman)

On April 24th, the night before the conference, a networking event and opening reception for the conference will be held at Headframes Spirits, a former SBDC client with growing notoriety for distilling some of the best spirits in the state. Bruce Baker, recent guest speaker of the newly created SBDC Invest in Success Training Series, claims that Headframes' High Ore Vodka is "way better than that [Grey] Goose stuff!" Conference attendees will also have the chance to sign-up for a behind-the-scenes tour of the SeaCast Investment Castings facility in Butte, taking place during the afternoon on the 24th. Space is limited to 50, so attendees are encouraged to pre-register to ensure a spot.

Rebecca Hedegaard Honored as the 2012 Montana SBDC State Star in New Orleans



(Photo: Ann Desch, SBDC State Director, right; Rebecca Hedegaard, SBDC Director, center; Tee Rowe, ASBDC President left)

Rebecca Hedegaard, Director of the SBDC at Big Sky Economic Development in Billings, was honored as the 2012 Montana SBDC State Star at the ASBDC State Star Reception during the ASBDC National Conference during September in New Orleans. Congratulations Rebecca!

Technical Assistance

**Montana Indian Equity Fund
Montana Entrepreneur Development Program**

Montana Indian Equity Fund
Montana Entrepreneur Development Program
Phone: 406-721-3663
Email: pbelangie@mt.gov
Website: <http://entrepreneur.mt.gov>



**Philip Belangie
Program Manager**

Indian Entrepreneurship Program

The Montana Department of Commerce's Indian Entrepreneurship Program provides small grants to Native American community organizations whose priorities include the development of private sector Native American owned businesses.

These organizations include tribal colleges, tribally owned and community based organizations. The success of each program is built on the following strengths: (1) leadership committed to business development; (2) delivery of services based on local needs; (3) support Montana Indian Equity Fund applicants; and (4) network and leverage with local banks, loan funds, tribal organizations, and state-wide partners that support the development of business in our Indian Communities.

In each community the following leaders have provided the direction and commitment required for long-term success: (continued next page)

Blackfeet Nation



(Photo: Joe Bremner)

“As the individual grows, the community grows,” says Joe Bremner. The Browning Community Development Corporation has been a leader in fostering social and economic development starting in 2004. Joe Bremner, the current interim chairman, has played a leading role in its success. In 2006, Joe was the SBA Minority Small Business Champion.

Crow Nation



(Photo: Yolanda Good Voice and Shawn Real Bird)

Shawn Real Bird, the Economic Development Director for the Crow Economic Development Department, has been a national leader promoting private sector Indian business ownership. “Without the development of a private sector in Indian Country, our only alternative is to continue in poverty.”

Shawn was the chief catalyst for the development of a secured transaction code for the Crow Nation. Yolanda Good Voice, the loan fund manager, has been responsible for the development of their new loan fund. Yolanda is the 2012 SBA Minority Small Business Champion.

Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Tribe



(Photo: James Parker Shield)

James Parker Shield is both an entrepreneur and a community developer. As an entrepreneur he founded and is the publisher of *Native Montana*. As a community developer he is the executive director of Warshield Development Corporation in Great Falls.

Fort Peck Tribes



(Photo Craig Smith and Tom Black Eagle)

Craig Smith is the Director of Institutional Development at Fort Peck Community College. He has an MBA and is the former manager of the college bookstore. Tom Black Eagle has wide experience in the private sector and works with developing entrepreneurs for the college.



Northern Cheyenne Tribe



(Photo: Roberta Harris and Henry Thompson)

Henry Thompson is the Extension Program Manager at Chief Dull Knife College. She has committed her programs to the development of the private sector and entrepreneurship with Northern Cheyenne community members for almost twenty years. Working with Roberta Harris, who teaches the Indianpreneurship Course at the college, they have built a very successful program focused on classroom education and counseling clients working on Indian Equity Fund grant applications.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Flathead)



(Photo: Steve Clairmont)

Steve Clairmont is the executive director of S&K Holding Company, Inc. a tribally owned business of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. S&K Holding Company's mission is the economic and business development of tribal members. Steve was the recipient of the SBA Minority Business Champion in 2010. Joe Durgalo, the current tribal chairman, is the former executive director of S&K.

Fort Belknap and Rocky Boys Tribes



(Photo: Barbara Stiffarm)

Barbara Stiffarm is the Executive Director of Opportunity Link, Inc. a community organization serving Northcentral Montana. Opportunity Link, Inc's mission statement is, "Uniting people, Linking resources, Fighting poverty." Barbara is a national leader in community development, among her many successes is the development of a transportation network.

Information

Montana Consolidated Plan

Phone: 406-841-2734

Email: jburk@mt.gov

Website: <http://housing.mt.gov/cp>



Julie Burk

Consolidated Plan Coordinator

Consolidated Plan Gears Up for Annual Action Plan

The Department is putting together the 2013-14 Annual Action Plan, which is submitted to HUD in mid-February 2013. The Consolidated Plan is a five-year document that describes the state's housing, and community and economic development priorities and goals. The programs covered by the Consolidated Plan are CDBG, HOME Investment Partnership, the Emergency Solutions Grant, and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). The Emergency Solutions Grant and HOPWA are administered by the Montana DPHHS.

Once the five-year document is submitted, the Department submits annual reports to HUD, which are called Annual Action Plans. The Annual Action Plan provides a summary of the actions, activities, and resources that will be used each year to address the needs and goals identified in the Consolidated Plan. The Department has sought comments from the public, non-profit housing and community and economic development organizations and advocacy groups, and other stakeholders, on the draft 2013 Annual Action Plan. Right now program managers are making updates to the draft, which will become public on Nov. 28, and will be posted on our website.

In addition to the 100-page Action Plan, appendices describe the public participation process, list a summary of public comments and responses from MDOC and DPHHS, and contain all manner of maps, which CEIC and our Community Development Division produce.

The Department is holding public input meetings, per HUD regulations. Our second one was August 30, and the final public hearing takes place on Dec. 12, at 9:00 am, Room 228, at the Montana Department of Commerce. After that date, there will be a 30-day public comment period. All bits and pieces that comprise the Annual Action Plan will be submitted to HUD by the middle of February.

Information

Census and Economic Information Center

Phone: 406-841-2740

Email: mcraigle@mt.gov

Website: <http://ceic.mt.gov>



Mary Craigle
Bureau Chief

Highlights from the Wood Products Report

On September 11th, Commerce Deputy Director Andy Poole presented the “Wood Products Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)” report to the Economic Affairs Interim Committee.

A Few Report Highlights

- * The companies that received Wood Products RLF loans were able to leverage over \$21 million from private funding, to the \$11.3 million in loans received from the RLF.

- * By June 30, 2012, 17 of the private businesses that had received Wood Products RLF loans had increased employment by 15.6% (115 jobs).

- * Estimated total value added from the output of goods and services produced and provide by the workers employed by the companies increased by 22% (\$29.7 million) as of June 30, 2012.

- * In 2012, the market value of all property owned by the businesses that received Wood Products RLF loans was over \$74 million. This translates to nearly \$1.3 million in taxable value of all land, buildings, and equipment owned by the respective businesses

The report was a collaborative effort between CEIC's Senior Economist Joe Ramler and Carolyn Jones, Section Manager for the Commerce Loan Fund. Implan econometric modeling was used to determine the increased economic output due to the infusion of loan dollars.



The full report can be found at <http://recovery.mt.gov/content/Commerce/WPIRS/docs/WoodProductsRLFStatusReport>.

Finance

Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology

PH: 406-841-2760

Email: ddesch@mt.gov

Website: <http://businessresources.mt.gov/MBRCT>

SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program

Small Business Innovation Research Program

Small Business Technology Transfer Program

PH: 406-841-2760

Email: ddesch@mt.gov

Website: <http://businessresources.mt.gov/msmfp>



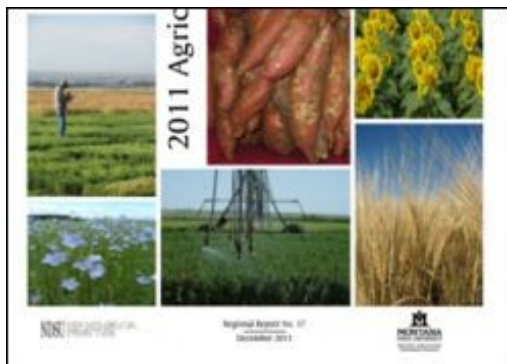
Dave Desch
Executive Director

Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology Commercialization Successes

Non-Structural Adhesives Requiring no Volatile Organic Compounds

Specialty Biopolymers LLC, Bozeman, has developed an environmentally-friendly wood adhesive as a result of this project. The company offers unique adhesive formulations based on microbially derived polymers and produced from renewable resources. The adhesives are VOC-free, non-toxic, and biodegradable. The products are offered online. One product is currently being evaluated by an overseas biotechnology company for multiple applications other than as an adhesive.

Value-Added Crop Development for Irrigated and Dryland Production in Eastern Montana



This project developed at Eastern Agricultural Research Center/Montana State University, Sidney, identified best durum, malt barley and safflower varieties and best production systems to add crop value for producers and end users in Eastern Montana. "Silver" durum was released by Montana State University in January 2012. This durum variety is early-maturing and day-length insensitive in contrast to all other varieties grown in Montana, which are day-length sensitive and result in later maturity. Because of its day-length insensitive characteristic, "Silver" durum can be grown in any part of Montana and matures at a normal time.

Durum with Low-Cadmium Uptake for Production in Montana

The objective of this study at Eastern Agricultural Research Center/Montana State University, Sidney, was to produce improved durum germplasm for development of varieties with low-cadmium uptake for Montana producers. Cadmium is a nonessential heavy metal that may cause health problems for some people and diet is the main source of Cd in non-smokers. Barilla, the largest pasta company in the world, became interested in Montana durum because of the low-cadmium program at EARC. The company wants only low cadmium durum. It contracted durum acres in the MonDak region for the first time in 2011. The number of acres expanded in 2012, and this trend is expected to continue.

High Value Crop Research and Demonstration Project to Promote Irrigation Development in Eastern Montana



The intent of this project at Eastern Agricultural Research Center/Montana State University, Sidney, was to promote sugarbeet, potato, alfalfa and vegetable crop production, processing, and marketing as part of a regional effort of growers, economic development groups, agri-businesses, brokers and processors to create new wealth and jobs in this region of Eastern Montana. Commercialization successes of the project include:



Sugarbeets Nearly all the sugarbeets produced in the lower Yellowstone River Valley are Roundup Ready, greatly improving weed control. Because of this research, more and more growers are switching from flood irrigation to overhead sprinkler irrigation systems, resulting in less water use for the same high quality of sugarbeet. Additionally, research at the EARC has shown that overhead sprinkler irrigation systems result in less leaching and run-off than flood irrigation. This project has developed production management technologies for high-value crop production under overhead sprinkler systems as well as under flood irrigation.



Potatoes A new red skin, yellow flesh variety of potatoes, named *MonDak Gold*, is in the test marketing stage for French fries, chips, and alternative market channels of local cuisine, western dining, new menu applications, quick service restaurants, as well as the processing and fresh markets. This variety is also currently undergoing seed potato increase for commercial production in Montana and North Dakota. Research supported by this project has sustained the yearly commercial production of 1,200-1,500 acres of French fry potatoes in the MonDak region and the startup of the Enander certified potato seed farm near Westby, Montana.

The Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology (MBRCT) was created by the 1999 Montana Legislature to provide a predictable and stable source of funding for research and commercialization projects to be conducted at research and commercialization centers in Montana. The purpose of the program is to encourage economic development through investment in research projects that have a clear path to commercialization.



Montana Department of Commerce
301 South Park Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
406-841-2704

Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program

Three companies have recently received Stage 1 funding from the Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program in the amount of \$15,000 each.



GeneSearch, Inc.
Paul Taylor

GeneSearch, Inc., Bozeman, a private research laboratory directed by Dr. Paul Taylor, has received an NIH SBIR Phase I award to optimize a novel embryo manipulation tool named the "Dracula Pipette" for clinical applications. The majority of this project involves engineering and refining. Testing of the prototype Dracula Pipette embryo manipulation tool will be conducted in the Department of Immunology & Infectious Diseases at Montana State University (MSU). The Dracula Pipette is a suck-and-puncture device that has been shown to provide unique capabilities for biopsy and freezing of pre-implantation embryos, and NIH has recognized the device's potential to revolutionize the science of embryology by classifying this project as a high priority.

MSMFP funds will be used for the expensive steps of producing micro-injection molding dies and sophisticated micromanipulation strategies designed to make the device more user-friendly, simpler to use and more versatile than equipment currently in use.

Recent work at MSU determined that the Dracula system could be used successfully on mouse embryos at all stages for biopsy and volume reduction before freezing. This is a major breakthrough that means the Dracula Pipette could become the tool of choice for manipulation of all early embryos of all mammalian species.



Synesis7 Corporation
Robert F. Dwyer, III

The objective of this project is to assist in developing a Department of Defense (DoD) SBIR project entitled "Advanced Common Integrative, Intelligent, Customizable and Scalable Automated Logistics Environment (ALE) Framework". The primary focus points of the effort are: (1) reduce total ownership, operational, and sustainment costs; and, (2) increase aircraft and other asset availability, reliability, and readiness. In addition to the DoD and other government agencies, the ALE Framework concept has potential application in diverse industries, such as commercial aviation, aerospace, power generation and distributions, energy/oil and gas, high-tech and capital intensive manufacturing and major health care delivery operations and networks.



S2 Corporation
Kris Merkel

MSMFP funds were awarded in conjunction with S2 Corporation's Phase 1 STTR grant from the National Science Foundation entitled "Photonics Enabled Extreme Bandwidth Wireless Communications Spectrum Manager". The project aims to use and adapt a photonics based extreme bandwidth RF and Microwave spectrum analyzer as a real-time spectral manager for wireless communications systems. The primary objective of the MSMFP funding is to extend the performance of the technology and to pursue the Phase II NSF SBIR award. Applications for S2's technology include both commercial and military sectors.

The 62nd Legislature appropriated \$375,000 per year for the 2013 biennium to the Department of Commerce for the Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program (MSMFP) (MCA 90-1-117 thru MCA 90-1-119). The purpose of the program is to foster job creation and economic development in Montana by providing matching funds to eligible businesses meeting the criteria set forth in the program guidelines. MSMFP is designed to grant funds to Montana companies that have been awarded a Small Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business Technology Transfer Program (Federal SBIR/STTR Program) Phase I award and that, if the opportunity to do so is available, intend to apply for a Federal SBIR/STTR Phase II award.

Contact:

Montana SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Program
Business Resources Division
MT Dept. of Commerce
P.O. Box 200505
Helena, MT 59620-0505

Finance

Indian Country Economic Development Program

Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) Program

Website: <http://iced.mt.gov>

Phone: 406-841-2775

Email: hsobrepena@mt.gov



Heather Sobrepeña-George
Program Manager

The Little Shell Tribe Hill 57 Tribal Visitor/Cultural Center

The Little Shell Tribe has invested their 2012 Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) funds into the purchase of a commercial building in Great Falls which they will renovate into a Tribal Visitor/Cultural Center. The building is nestled at the base of historic Hill 57, located in the outskirts of Great Falls where many Native families, especially among the Little Shell, Chippewa Cree, and Blackfeet, established themselves in an off-reservation community. Hill 57 is visible over the northwestern skyline of Great Falls with white letters "GF" on its southern face and is still home to a handful of Little Shell families. Plans are to renovate the two-story building into a historical visitor center, gift shop, media room, and historical archive research library. Expansion plans could include a larger kitchen and common area to provide space for tribal activities, family gatherings and other revenue generating events.



Historic Hill 57 in the distance backdrops the new Little Shell Tribal Visitor/Cultural Center. One of the remaining family sites is to the far left of the picture.



Front end of the recently purchased building that will house the Little Shell Tribal Visitor/Cultural Center. The entryway will be renovated to include an enclosed entrance and landscaping.

Technical Assistance

State Tribal Economic Development Commission

State Tribal Economic Development Commission (STED)

Website: <http://tribal.mt.gov>

Phone: 406-841-2775

Email: hsobrepena@mt.gov



Heather Sobrepeña-George
Program Manager

The State Tribal Economic Development Commission met in Billings on August 13, 2012 at the Holiday Inn Grand. Presentations were made by several different entities:

- Billi Anne Raining Bird-Morsette, CEO of Plain Green LLC, gave a presentation on the tribal lending entity on the Rocky Boy's Reservation owned by the Chippewa Cree Tribe,
- Director Karen Atkinson gave a presentation via phone for the Office of Indian Energy & Economic Development about their programs,
- Executive Director Scott Davis of the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission sat in on the meeting to better understand how the State of Montana interacts with the tribal governments,
- Assistant Administrator Chris James gave a presentation of the Small Business Administration
- Jackie Yellowtail (Apsalooke Tours and Tourism Advisory Council member) gave a brief update on the September American Indian and Alaska Native Tourism Association conference hosted by the Crow Nation in Billings, Montana,
- American Red Cross CIO, Allison Hupp and Tribal Liaison, Jennifer Perfater, presented the scope of Red Cross' services and the response to Indian Country over the last several disasters (floods at Rocky Boy's, Crow, and Fort Belknap and fires at Northern Cheyenne and Crow),
- Presentation by Dyani Bingham, Indian Art Market development consultant and Cinda Holt of the Montana Arts Council,
- Presentation by Sr. Vice President Chief Lending Officer Clay Colombe

The STED Commission is scheduled to meet again in November 28, 2012 in Great Falls.



STED Commission member at their August 13, 2012 meeting.



Fort Belknap Indian Community Councilman Ed Moore (left), Scott Davis (North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission Executive Director (middle), and Loren Stiffarm, STED Commission representative from Fort Belknap.

Finance

Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Program

Community Development Block Grant
Economic Development (CDBG-ED)

Ph: 406-841-2736

Email: ddemarais@mt.gov

Website: <http://cdbged.mt.gov>



Pioneer Medical Center
Sweet Grass County and
City of Big Timber

Sweet Grass County & the City of Big Timber received a \$624,000 grant to assist Pioneer Medical Center with the purchase of a new CT scanner and additional medical equipment. The assistance to Pioneer Medical Center will result in the retention of 86 FTE's, of which 44 will be low and moderate income persons. Matching funds were provided by Sweet Grass Health Care Foundation, Sweet Grass County, and private grants.



Debra Demarais
Section Manager

There are currently no CDBG-ED funds available. Application guidelines for 2013 will be published February 2013.

► Montana Finance Information Center ◀

The Montana Finance Information Center provides summary information for the most significant financing resources available from state, federal, and local institutions. For comprehensive information and links to critical information on starting a business in Montana, economic development, housing or community development programs visit our website at: <http://www.mtfinanceonline.com>.

For more information contact Karyl Tobel, Assistant Division Administrator at (406) 841-2732 or karylt@mt.gov.

Finance

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program

Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund (BSTF) Program

Ph: 406-841-2744

Email: nfaroni@mt.gov

Program Website: <http://bstf.mt.gov>



Nancy Faroni
Section Manager

Contact Program Staff for Funding Availability



The ZaneRay Group
Whitefish, MT

Flathead County Economic Development Authority has been awarded a Category I Job Creation grant from the Montana Department of Commerce's Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program (BSTF) in the amount of \$67,350 to assist The ZaneRay Group with the purchase of equipment and lease rate reduction. The total project cost is \$100,550 and BSTF funding is contingent upon the company hiring up to 10 new employees over a 24 month period.

Established in 1994, The ZaneRay Group is an Ecommerce consultant group based in Whitefish, Montana. The company specializes in direct-to-consumer websites for mid to large size companies primarily in the outdoor industry. Their clients span across the country and internationally and include notable names such as Patagonia, Head Skis and Nixon Watches. They provide design services, page-level programming, server-side programming, systems management, and on-line business consulting. In 2012, the company was voted No. 10 out of 100 selected companies by Outside Magazine as the "Best Places to Work".

Finance

Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant Program

Primary Sector Workforce Training Grant (WTG)

Ph: 406-841-2744

Email: nfaroni@mt.gov

Program Website: <http://wtg.mt.gov>

Contact Program Staff for Funding Availability



Nancy Faroni
Section Manager

WTG/BSTF Wage Requirements Will Be Increasing

Per state statute, a WTG grant may be provided only for a new job that has an average weekly wage that meets or exceeds the lesser of 170% of Montana's current minimum wage or the current average weekly wage of the county in which the employees are to be principally employed, provided minimum wage requirements are met. The department may consider the value of employee benefits in calculating the expected annual wage. Eligible benefits are considered those benefits not required by federal law.

Beginning January 1, 2013, Montana's minimum wage will be increasing to \$7.80 per hour. Based on the program requirement, the wage threshold of 170% of Montana's current minimum wage will increase from \$13.00 per hour to \$13.26 per hour.

In the fall of each year, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry compiles the Montana Average Wage by County—All Industries. The data has been released and will become effective for both the WTG and BSTF programs on November 1, 2012. The new wage rates can be found on both the WTG website: www.wtg.mt.gov and the BSTF website: www.bstf.mt.gov. All but two counties have experienced increased annual average wages.

With the increasing required wages, now is the time to submit your WTG and BSTF applications. Both programs currently have funds available for projects. Guidelines and application materials can be found on the websites. Program staff is available to assist in completing the applications.

Finance

Montana Wood Products Revolving Loan Fund

Montana Distressed Wood Products Industry
Recovery and Stabilization (WPIRS) Program
PH: 406-841-2594
Email: cjones@mt.gov
Program Website: <http://recovery.mt.gov/commerce/wpirs>



Carolyn Jones
Section Manager

Montana State Small Business Credit Initiative Program (MT SSBCI)

Montana State Small Business Credit Initiative Program (MT SSBCI)
PH: 406-841-2594
Email: cjones@mt.gov
Website: <http://mtssbci.mt.gov>

Contact Programs for
Funding Availability

MT SSBCI Program

Montana has received its third tranche of SSBCI money from the US Department of Treasury. Montana is the first of all Treasury's SSBCI program recipients to receive their final disbursement of funds. At this time, forty-five loans have been awarded totaling more than \$10.5 million and applications have been received for the remaining funds.

Other Business Assistance Programs

Made in Montana Program (Promotion of authentic Montana products)

Contact: Sue Clark-Jones
Phone: 406-841-2757
Email: madeinmontana@mt.gov
Website: <http://www.madeinmontanausa.com>

Export Montana (Helps Montana companies compete globally)

Contact: Sara Warren
Phone: 406-841-2754
Email: exportmontana@mt.gov
Website: <http://exportmontana.com>

Montana Business Finance Program/Certified Regional Development Corporations

Contact: Janice Wannebo
Phone: 406-841-2751
Email: jwannebo@mt.gov
Website: <http://businessresources.mt.gov/MBFP>
Website: <http://businessresources.mt.gov/crdc>